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The Daily Nebraskan is now taking applications for fall staff in the arts and entertainment department. Applicants must be enrolled for at least six credit hours at UNL and maintain at least a 2.0 grade average. Interested parties should report to the Daily Nebraskan, Room 34 Nebraska Union, and speak to Bret Schulte. Good luck.

Senior helps speech team roll

UNL orator named one of best at forensics tourney

BY MARISSA CARSTENS
Staff Reporter

Nine years ago, a speech coach saw UNL senior Mike Wagner acting in a church play and recruited him for future speech competitions.

Wise move. This year, Wagner was named one of the best two collegiate orators in the nation and led the University of Nebraska-Lincoln speech team to an all-time-best eighth-place finish at the American Forensics Association National Individual Event Tournament in Flagstaff, Ariz., April 5.

Wagner finished second in individual sweepstakes, impromptu speaking and communication analysis. He also finished third in persuasive speaking.

Wagner was not the only member of the speech team to exceed at nationals.

Out of the 12 members the team took to nationals this year, nine of their events made it to quarterfinals. And of those nine, eight events were taken to semifinals.

Among those eight events was a duet presented by freshmen Jody Christopherson and Katie Coch that placed fifth.

"It's really exciting," said Christopherson of her fifth-place finish.

Such young talent makes Wagner see good things for the future of the UNL speech team, he said.

"We have so many strong members. I hope they can take their victory and keep the heart of the people we are losing this year and keep

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MIKE WAGNER
UNL speech team member

improving,” he said.

The speech team's high national ranking was par for the course at competitions this year.

In February, the team excelled at three speech competitions all held the same weekend.

By splitting into three sections, the team competed in the Sweetheart Swing, a two-tournament event hosted by the University of Oklahoma in Norman, Okla., and West Texas A&M University in Canyon, Texas, and a competition in Norfolk.

In the Swing, Wagner won the individual sweepstakes championship in both tournaments.

Sam Boerboom placed third in interpretive duo with his partner Roger Stahl.

Stahl also was the tournament champion in poetry. Overall the team placed fourth, despite taking only three members to the competition.

While Boerboom, Stahl and Wagner competed in Oklahoma, six other members were taking second place in "The Hawk," a speech competition hosted by Northeast Community College in Norfolk.

Craig Warnings finished second in the individual sweepstakes after

placing first in after-dinner speaking and third in duo interpretation with partner Christy Givens.

Christopherson and her duo partner, J.R. Gould, won the duo-interpretation competition.

Gould also earned second place in after-dinner speaking, and the team's only third-year member, Wayne Bena, was the oratory champion.

The weekend was also good for Heather Erickson, who placed seventh overall as the only UNL participant in a Suffolk University tournament in Boston.

A week later, the team reunited to claim first place in state competition.

Despite the glorious year of tournament successes, Wagner and Christopherson said they agree the highlight of the year was competing at nationals.

But Christopherson said the team could do even better next year.

"We have to get back to Nationals and place in the top five next year," she said.

With a large incoming class of prospective members and many returning members, Wagner said the team should meet its high goal.

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